

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 8414

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, AR

SUBJECT: VIDELA BLOCKS LORENZO MIGUEL'S EFFORTS TO INTERVENE BA PROVINCE

1. LORENZO MIGUEL HAS LONG BEEN PUSHING FOR THE INTERVENTION OF BA PROVINCE AS A MEANS OF DESTROYING THE POWER BASE OF HIS ARCH RIVAL, VICTORIO CALABRO, THE GOV OF THE PROVINCE. INTERIOR MIN ROBLEDO, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS CONSISTENTLY OPPOSED THE IDEA, NOT ONLY BECAUSE HE WISHED TO AVOID THE STORM THIS WOULD HAVE CAUSED IN THE UCR AND AMONG THE ANTI-VERTICALISTA PERONISTS, BUT ALSO BECAUSE HE WISHED TO AVOID GIVING LORENZO MIGUEL SUCH A STRONG CARD TO PLAY. TO SOME EXTENT, ROBLEDO AND LORENZO MIGUEL FIND THEMSELVES ON THE SAME SIDE OF THE FENCE THESE DAYS. NONETHELESS, THEY ARE POTENTIAL POWER RIVALS AND DO NOT LIKE ONE ANOTHER PERSONALLY. ROBLEDO WOULD HAVE NO WISH TO STRENGTHEN MIGUEL'S HAND NEEDLESSLY.

2. AT THE CABINET MEETING ON DEC 24, HOWEVER, IT APPEARED THAT MIGUEL HAD WON DESPITE ROBLEDO'S OBJECTIONS. JUSTICE MIN CORVALAN NANCLARES RAISED THE INTERVENTION ISSUE AND MADE IT CLEAR THAT IN VIEW OF THE SITUATION IN THE PROVINCE POINTED UP BY THE MONTE CHINGOLO ATTACK, MRS. PERON INTENDED TO INTERVENE. INDEED, SEVERAL REPORTS HAVE INDICATED THAT (PRODDED BY LORENZO MIGUEL) SHE HAD ALREADY SIGNED AN
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INTERVENTION DECREE. ROBLEDO AGAIN OPPOSED AND SUGGESTED

THAT THE THREE CINCS BE ASKED FOR THEIR OPINION. THAT AFTERNOON, THEY WERE CALLED TO THE CABINET MEETING.

3. EVEN BEFORE ANSWERING THE CALL, HOWEVER, VIDELA, KNOWING FULL WELL WHAT WAS AFOOT, HAD SENT A TELEGRAM TO GOV CALABRO CONGRATULATING HIM ON THE OUTSTANDING MANNER IN WHICH HIS PROVINCIAL POLICE HAD COOPERATED WITH THE ARMY IN DEFEATING THE TERRORIST ATTACKS THE PREVIOUS DAY. BY THE TIME THE THREE MILITARY COMMANDERS REACHED THE CABINET MEETING, THEN, IT WAS CLEAR THAT THEY HAD LINED UP WITH CALABRO AND WOULD OPPOSE INTERVENTION. THEY DID JUST THAT AT THE MEETING, TAKING THE POSITION THAT INTERVENTION WOULD BE UNWISE AND INCONVENIENT.

4. THE CABINET THEREFORE BACKED AWAY AND REFUSED TO APPROVE THE INTERVENTION. SHORTLY THEREAFTER ROBLEDO STATED CATEGORICALLY TO NEWSMEN THAT "THERE IS NO INTERVENTION DECREE." (NOTE: HE DID NOT SAY THAT THERE HAD NOT BEEN ONE, HOWEVER). AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING, VIDELA APPEARS TO HAVE SCORED A VICTORY OVER MIGUEL. THE LATTER, HOWEVER, DOES NOT GIVE UP EASILY. EVEN AFTER THE ARMED FORCES HAD MADE KNOWN THEIR OPPOSITION TO INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT FOR CALABRO, MIGUEL ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE IN THE NAME OF THE 62 ORGANIZATIONS ATTACKING CALABRO AND DEMANDING INTERVENTION. IN A SNIDE IF INDIRECT REFERENCE TO VIDELA'S CABLE, THE COMMUNIQUE SUGGESTED THAT NO MATTER WHAT OTHERS MIGHT DO, THEY 62 ORGANIZATIONS WOULD NOT APPLAUD CALABRO.

5. MIGUEL MAY BE BUYING MORE TROUBLE THAN HE WANTS IN PUSHING THE MATTER. NOT ONLY IS HE NOW IN DIRECT CONFLICT WITH THE ARMED FORCES, HE HAS ALSO IRRITATED SOME OF HIS FELLOW LABOR LEADERS. SEVERAL, INCLUDING SOME IN THE 62 ORGANIZATIONS, OBJECTED STRONGLY TO THE FACT THAT LORENZO MIGUEL ISSUED THE COMMUNIQUE WITHOUT CONSULTING THE 62 ORGANIZATIONS. THIS, THEY SAID, WAS STRICTLY LORENZO MIGUEL'S SHOW AND HE DID NOT HAVE THEIR SUPPORT IN THE POSITION HE WAS TAKING. (MIGUEL, MEANWHILE, WAS REPORTED OVER THE WEEKEND TO BE IN URUGUAY. WHY HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN THERE IS THE SUBJECT OF LIVELY SPECULATION BUT NO CONCRETE INFORMATION.)

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6. COMMENT: THAT VIDELA AND CALABRO ARE NOW OPENLY LINED UP AGAINST LORENZO MIGUEL IS AN INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT INDEED. WITH SUCH ALLIES, CALABRO SHOULD BE ABLE TO DEFEND HIMSELF HANDILY AGAINST MIGUEL ATTACKERS.
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